

Media, PA — On Monday, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07), Vice Chairman of the Small Business Committee and a member of the Education and Labor Committee, held an Economic Development Summit at Delaware County Community College to provide an opportunity for business leaders and owners from across the district, local chambers of commerce, economic development professionals, venture capitalists, representatives from financial institutions, union and workforce leaders, and elected and non-elected community leaders to hear about programs to bring economic growth to our local and regional economies.

“This Summit was organized with one simple goal in mind – to connect our local businesses with federal, state, and local resources so our current businesses can grow. Small businesses are the engine of our economy and all benefit when they are able to expand and maximize their growth potential,” noted Congressman Sestak. “By working together at these summits, we can bring more folks to the table to forge a road map for our economic future.”

Presentations during the Summit explored ways to encourage business growth in and around Delaware County, as well as reinvest in low-wealth and underserved communities throughout the region. In particular, it focused on encouraging economic development by connecting local businesses with federal, state, and local resources and programs.

Topics covered in the Summit include:

- Small business development programs;
- Assistance with manufacturing technology;
- Workforce training;
- Assistance with penetrating global markets; and
- Understanding the federal grant and appropriations process.

“This is all about helping small businesses start and grow – themselves and jobs,” added Joe. “Over the last 3 years, we have lost approximately 600 small businesses in our region. This Summit is about working together to boost our region’s economy and create more good-paying jobs. We want our kids to be able to stay here and raise their families.”

Congressman Sestak will be turning the discussion from today’s Summit into action items, including legislation, that he can pursue in Congress.

On April 12, Congressman Sestak held our District's first Economic Development Summit, a day-long event which brought together several hundred business leaders and owners, economic development professionals, financial investors, union leaders, and educators from across the District to participate in discussions to address the key issues facing workforce development, access to capital, business development and growth, community economic development, and economic development strategies.

Congressman Sestak has a strong commitment to creating jobs and helping small business. As Vice Chairman of the Small Business Committee, Rep. Sestak has worked to support new and small businesses through open access to loans, credit and capital, advocates fair and true tax relief for small business, and work to reduce onerous regulations and paperwork.

Congressman Sestak cosponsored the Family Small Business Tax Fairness Act (H.R. 868) with Congressman Lloyd Doggett (D-TX) to streamline small business joint-tax filings. He also voted in favor of the H.R. 976, Small Business Tax Relief Act--a bipartisan bill with \$1.3 billion in tax cuts to help small businesses invest in new equipment and hire new workers.

In preparation for the Defense Authorization bill, Congressman Sestak met with numerous businesses throughout the district. He then worked with them in pursuing those initiatives and ventures that support this transformation, including vital research efforts in equipment technology, bio-terrorism, logistics systems, wireless technologies, interoperability, emergency broadband systems, and other areas that assist our men and women in uniform. Because of these meetings, he was able to relay to the House Armed Services Committee the important work that is being done in his district toward this critical transformation and ultimately was able to secure authorized funding, nearly \$40 million, for all of these industries and research laboratories in the Defense Authorization bill.

Congressman Sestak has already taken steps to change federal contracting to improve the accessibility of small business to federal contracts. He passed House Amendment 163 on the House floor to the Small Business Fairness in Contracting Act requiring that large contracts are to be unbundled to open the bidding process to small businesses. This means that multi-million dollar contracts that previously would have only been available to large companies and corporations are now opened for bidding to small and medium sized businesses.

In addition, in the Defense Authorization bill that was passed on House floor, Congressman Sestak inserted an amendment that mandated that a contract officer must certify that they have done market research, including by using a web browser, to see if small businesses qualify for

any contract over \$1million. This is important because 23% of all federal contracts are to be given to small businesses, but currently only 6.5% them are given to small businesses in the Seventh District.

During a recent visit to a company located in his District, Congressman Sestak saw a good example of why expanding access to these large contracts to small businesses is an efficient and effective use of our nation's resources, particularly in "new or transformational" requirements of our federal agencies. Gestalt, a small business located in the 7th District, recently won and completed an Army contract — which they competed for against a very large defense corporation — to fix the Defense Readiness Reporting System.

"American small businesses bring innovation, creativity, competition and lower costs to the federal table. When these businesses are excluded from federal opportunities through contract bundling, our agencies, small businesses, and the taxpayers lose," added Congressman Sestak. "Fairer access for small businesses will lead to lower prices and the improvement of the quality of goods and services procured by the federal government, bringing greater returns for taxpayer dollars."

In addition to today's Summit, Congressman Sestak held a two-part Education Summit, with Education and Labor Committee Chairman George Miller and Higher Education, Lifelong Learning, and Competitiveness Chairman Ruben Hinojosa, to discuss and strategize about the issues surrounding Early Childhood, special education, Elementary and Secondary Education, and Higher Education.

During the Education Summit's panel discussion on early childhood education, Congressman Sestak's panelists and guests discussed the need to address three issues pertaining to Head Start: continued support of parental involvement in local Head Start policy councils; extending eligibility of Head Start for families up to 130 percent of the poverty level, ways to recruit retain head start teachers, including loan forgiveness. As a result of this discussion, Congressman Sestak worked with Chairman Miller to incorporate parental involvement in local Head Start policy councils and to extend the eligibility of Head Start families into H.R. 1429, the Improving Head Start Act. Joe also offered an amendment during the Head Start Reauthorization bill to provide loan forgiveness (up to \$17,500) for Head Start teachers, the same currently offered to math, science, and special education teachers.

The congressman's third education summit was a Congressional Field Hearing held with

Chairman Dale Kildee (D-MI) and focused on No Child Left Behind.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "DeepBlue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

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